



## U. S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney  
Northern District of Illinois

Patrick J. Fitzgerald  
United States Attorney

Federal Building  
219 South Dearborn Street, Fifth Floor  
Chicago, Illinois 60604  
(312) 353-5300

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 25, 2006  
[www.usdoj.gov/usao/iln](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/iln)

PRESS CONTACT:  
AUSA Christina Egan (312)353-4095  
AUSA/PIO Randall Samborn (312) 353-5318

### **TWO CHICAGO POLICE OFFICERS ARRESTED FOR ROLES IN ALLEGED CONSPIRACY TO STEAL MORE THAN \$31,000 IN UNDERCOVER STING**

CHICAGO – Two Chicago police officers and an alleged drug dealer allegedly conspired to steal approximately \$31,100 in recent months, believing that the money belonged to another drug dealer who had stashed the cash in self-storage facilities. In fact, however, the storage lockers were rented by agents who placed the cash inside the storage units as part of undercover sting investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Chicago Police Department Internal Affairs Division, law enforcement officials announced today. The officers allegedly used information provided by the third defendant to obtain state search warrants, which they and other officers then served two months apart at two Grand Avenue storage facilities, where they obtained the cash. The officers then failed to report any seizure from the first theft in June, and reported seizing only a portion of the money from the second theft in August, according to a federal criminal complaint unsealed today.

The officers, **Richard E. Doroniuk**, 30, and **Mahmoud Shamah**, 27, also known as “Mike,” were arrested at their homes early today without incident. Both were assigned to a tactical team in the 22<sup>nd</sup> District on the city’s south side. Doroniuk, an officer since January 2000, and Shamah, who

joined the police force in August 2001, were expected to appear at 3:30 p.m. before U.S. Magistrate Judge Nan Nolan in U.S. District Court. The third defendant, **Larry Cross**, 55, of Chicago, also known as “Peanut,” was already in state custody.

All three were charged with conspiracy to commit theft of government funds in a complaint that was filed yesterday and unsealed following the arrests. The charges were announced by Patrick J. Fitzgerald, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois; Robert D. Grant, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation; and Philip J. Cline, Superintendent of the Chicago Police Department. The investigation is continuing, they said.

“This joint investigation by the Internal Affairs Division and the FBI should send a clear message to the public and to the Department’s 13,600 honorable men and women that officers who violate the public trust will be held accountable,” Superintendent Cline said. “Today’s arrests result from the Department’s ongoing commitment to remove bad cops from the streets. We expect all officers to do their jobs with integrity, professionalism and respect. Anything less is unacceptable.”

According to the complaint affidavit, the FBI obtained information from a cooperating witness (CW1) regarding conversations with Cross in which Cross discussed ripoffs conducted by the police officers. Cross also discussed his own involvement in these ripoffs and asked CW1 to provide information about locations for the officers to commit thefts. At the direction of the FBI, CW1 provided information to Cross about a storage unit containing drugs and drug proceeds.

The first alleged theft took place on June 13 at the Grand-Pulaski Self Storage facility, where undercover agents had rented a storage unit and placed \$20,000 in a black backpack-type bag that was left in the locker. On June 13, police officers believed to be Doroniuk and Shamah took Cross to court to serve as the informant for a search warrant for the storage unit. Officers later identified

as Doroniuk, Shamah, Officer A and Officer B went to the storage unit with the search warrant. Surveillance agents observed these officers enter and exit the unit carrying bolt cutters, the affidavit states, and Doroniuk, Shamah and Officer B were wearing bullet-proof vests and had visible weapons. Telephone calls between Cross and CW1 later revealed that the police officers told Cross that there were no drugs or drug proceeds inside the unit. But when the undercover agents returned to the facility a few days later, the manager on duty told them that the officers had entered the unit with a warrant and he saw them take a black backpack-type bag out of the locker. On June 23, the undercover agents returned to the locker facility again and cut off a lock that was believed to have been put on the unit's door by the police officers. The agents then observed that the black bag containing the \$20,000 was no longer there. As of early October, there were no police records of any inventories of cash or other items seized by officers in connection with the search warrant that was issued for the storage unit, according to the complaint.

In July and August, investigators obtained court-approval to intercept conversations on telephones used by Cross and Doroniuk. After the wiretap on Doroniuk's phone began, CW1 provided information to Cross at the FBI's direction about a second storage locker at Grand and Kilbourn that purportedly contained drugs and at least \$30,000 in drug proceeds. CW1 told Cross the money was in a cardboard box sealed with duct tape and the box was in a garbage bag. The FBI had placed \$18,100 in this storage unit. On Aug. 18, officers later identified as Doroniuk, Shamah, Officer A, Officer C, and partners Officer D and Officer E, went to the storage unit with a search warrant. Court-authorized video surveillance recorded some of the events inside the unit, including Shamah taking the cardboard box containing the cash out of the garbage bag, the complaint alleges.

Intercepted conversations later revealed that Doroniuk and Shamah turned in \$7,000 as evidence recovered from the search, and they allegedly stole the remaining \$11,100. The conversations further disclosed that Doroniuk and Shamah allegedly agreed to each take \$5,500 and to give Cross \$1,000 – \$500 each from Doroniuk and Shamah. The next day, after receiving his share of the proceeds, Cross told CW1 that the officers had given him \$800 and he gave \$400 to CW1 from his share of the ripoff proceeds, according to the complaint.

In addition to the two ripoffs, the investigation revealed that Doroniuk and Shamah, with the assistance of Cross, allegedly planned to learn where the victim of their previous thefts lived so they could commit a home invasion to steal any money and drugs stashed there. The officers further planned to conduct a home invasion of Individual E's residence, with the assistance of Individual A, who Doroniuk told during an intercepted conversation that he would buy her "a diamond necklace or something" with the stolen money he obtained.

During intercepted conversations on August 17, the day before the second theft, Doroniuk discussed the arrest of other Chicago police officers with Individual A. Later that night, he discussed the arrests with Shamah, telling him "we got to be ... real smart about this ... man ..." After the ripoff the following day, Shamah and Doroniuk discussed the reasons for turning in \$7,000 as evidence, indicating it would look like they were honest if they turned in that much money.

The government is being represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Christina Egan. If convicted, theft conspiracy carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a maximum fine of \$250,000. The Court, however, would determine the appropriate sentence to be imposed.

The public is reminded that a complaint contains only charges and is not evidence of guilt. The defendants are presumed innocent and are entitled to a fair trial at which the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

###